United States Mint Salutes a Great Quarter from the Great Lakes State

January 26, 2004

26th Quarter, Honoring Michigan, Kicks Off Second Half of 50 State Quarters Program

Lansing, Michigan — United States Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and a host of dignitaries officially launched the Michigan commemorative quarter–dollar coin into circulation today from the steps of the State Capitol. The new Michigan quarter–dollar is the first to be issued in 2004 and the 26th quarter of the United States Mint's 50 State Quarters Program. It inaugurates the second half of the 10–year initiative, the most popular coin program in U.S. history. Children who attended today's ceremony received shiny new Michigan quarters. Bank representatives were also on hand to exchange bills and coins for Michigan quarters.

Exactly 167 years ago today, on January 26th, 1837, Michigan became the 26th state to be admitted into the Union. The Michigan quarter depicts a textured outline of the State and the Great Lakes system. The quarter is inscribed "Great Lakes State." Michigan borders four of the five Great Lakes, more than any other state. Standing anywhere in Michigan, a person is within 85 miles of one of the Great Lakes.

"With this quarter, the citizens of Michigan are recognizing the importance of the Great Lakes to Michigan's history, economy and environment," said Director Fore. "When Americans pull this quarter out of their pockets, it will provide them with a tremendous geography and history lesson."

In November 2001, former Governor John Engler established the 25–member Michigan Quarter Commission. The Commission chose five candidate design concepts after receiving more than 4,300 from the State's residents. Governor Engler forwarded the candidates to the United States Mint. After review by the Commission of Fine Arts and the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee, and approval by the Secretary of the Treasury, they were returned to Governor Granholm for a final recommendation. Following consultation with the Michigan Quarter Commission, Governor Granholm chose the "Great Lakes State" design.

Michigan quarters in two–roll sets and bags go on sale beginning at 12:00 noon today on the United States Mint's website at www.usmint.gov, and by calling 1–800–USA–MINT. Lesson plans can also be downloaded from the website. The plans feature the Michigan state quarter and the 25 previous 50 State Quarters coins issued so far.

Launched in 1999, the United States Mint's 50 State Quarters Program is a 10–year initiative that honors each of the states in the order they ratified the Constitution or were admitted into the Union. Each quarter is produced for about 10 weeks and will never be produced again. Surveys show that more than 130 million adults collect the quarters.

Created by Congress in 1792, the United States Mint is the manufacturer of legal tender coinage for the United States. In FY 2003, the United States Mint manufactured approximately 11.4 billion coins and generated revenue of $1.4 billion. For more information, and to download high resolution images of the Michigan quarter, please visit www.usmint.gov/pressroom/index.cfm?action=photo#SQ2004

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